



News Release

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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Northern Idaho Adjudication Begins With A Series Of Town Hall Meetings Planned

The Idaho Attorney General's office petitioned the Northern Idaho Adjudication (NIA) District Court today to begin cataloging and confirming all surface and ground water rights in much of the Idaho panhandle. This includes water rights held by the United States, Indian tribes, the state, local governments, and private property owners.

As directed by the Idaho Legislature, the Northern Idaho Adjudication will proceed in three phases. Phase 1 begins this year with Basins 91-95 (Coeur d'Alene and Spokane River Basins). Contingent on funding, Phase 2 will address Basin 87 (Palouse River Basin) and Phase 3 will deal with Basins 96 and 97 (Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River Basins).

IDWR will hold a series of town hall meetings from July 21st to July 24th in seven northern Idaho cities to provide information and education about the adjudication process. The schedule for the meetings is:

Date	Time	City	Place
7/21/2008	7:00 p.m.	Wallace	Wallace Jr.-Sr. High School Commons Area
7/22/2008	2:00 p.m.	Plummer	Plummer Community Center, 520 C Street, corner of 6 th & C
7/22/2008	7:00 p.m.	St. Maries	Eagles, 707 Main Street
7/23/2008	2:00 p.m.	Blanchard	Grange Hall, 445 Rusho Lane
7/23/2008	7:00 p.m.	Athol	Athol Community Center, 30355 Third Street
7/24/2008	1:00 p.m.	Coeur d'Alene	Dept. of Transportation, EOC Room, 600 W. Prairie Avenue
7/24/2008	7:00 p.m.	Post Falls	Post Falls Senior Center, 1215 E 3 rd Avenue

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Northern Idaho Adjudication Begins – Page 2

The 2008 Idaho Legislature made changes to the original Northern Idaho Adjudication plan. Those changes include reducing the fees charged for water right claims to match the fees set for the Snake River Basin Adjudication. Many water right holders will pay a filing fee of only \$25 dollars to have a small domestic water right adjudicated.

Other amendments included removing the Kootenai River Basin in the northernmost part of the state (Basin 98) from the adjudication. Changes also included direction by the legislature that small domestic and stock water claims be deferred. If approved by the NIA District Court, holders of these rights will have the option of filing claims in the Northern Idaho Adjudication or deferring filing to a later date. However, IDWR recommends that they file in this proceeding to protect their water right.

The adjudication will enhance the value of a water right holder's property by giving certainty to their water right. Many water right holders will file via a new online claims taking process through the IDWR website without the need for the services of an attorney. For more involved claims the use of an attorney is always an option.

"Water right holders in northern Idaho will benefit from the experience gained in the Snake River Basin Adjudication (SRBA). Our agency has experienced personnel and proven procedures. All parties involved will also be able to rely on the substantial body of water law developed during the SRBA," IDWR Director David Tuthill said.

IDWR personnel will also be available to assist claimants by phone or in person at the IDWR Northern Region office at 7600 N. Mineral Drive Suite 100 in Coeur d'Alene. More information about Northern Idaho Adjudication can be found at: http://www.idwr.idaho.gov/water/North_Id_Adju/

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